

claim 1 is remaining pending in this application. Claim 1 has been allowed.

In general, Applicant has endeavored to place the application in condition for allowance and, as amended, it is believed that the application is now in condition for allowance and the passage of same to issue is respectfully requested.

CLAIMS

The claims have been amended to cancel claims 2 to 20 which have been rejected for various reasons stated in the cited office action. Claim 1 has been allowed

35 USC 103 REJECTIONS

Claims 2 to 20 were rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,712,706 to Castore et al. ("Castore") in view of pending published patent application 2001/0005204 Matsumoto et al. ("Matsumoto") for reasoning outlined and discussed in Office Action No. 2 and the above cited Office Action No. 3.

Applicant continues to disagree respectfully with the reasoning upon which the Examiner bases his rejection of claims 2 to 20, but since these claims have been canceled by this amendment, notes that any further analysis or argument is moot at this point. However, Applicant further respectfully reserves his right to disagree with the Examiner's arguments and to continue to assert a belief that these claims remain patentable over the cited references or any other known prior art.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that in light of the cancellation of

claims 2 through 20 and the allowance of claim 1, the application is in condition for allowance and the passing of the application to issue is respectfully solicited.

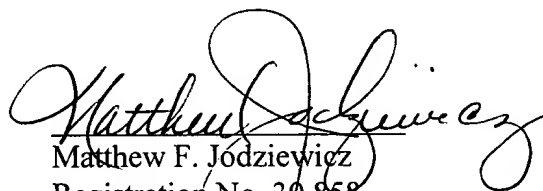
If the Examiner has any comments, questions, objections or recommendations, the Examiner is encouraged to telephone or email the undersigned at the telephone number or email address given below for prompt action.

If an extension of time is due in connection with the filing of this submission, such extension is hereby requested.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated:

September 13, 2004



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CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

I hereby certify that this correspondence is, on the date shown below, being deposited with the U.S. Postal Service with sufficient postage as first class mail in an envelope addressed to the Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450.

Dated:

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